

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Incentive Award Program and Procedure

Purpose: The purpose of this program is to implement the statewide employee incentive award policy within the Office of Public Instruction.

- I. Program description
- II. Definitions
- III. Program coordinator responsibilities
- IV. Process to track ideas and suggestions; procedure to nominate individuals, groups or teams for awards
- V. Evaluation and prioritization of nominations for awards
- VI. Presentation of awards
- VII. Closing

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Statewide Employee Incentive Award Program was created by the November 1993 special session of the Legislature.

The program rewards outcomes and achievements, which can be documented, rather than ideas or suggestions for future improvements to agency operations. An idea or suggestion becomes eligible to be nominated for an award when it is implemented or when documented achievements and outcomes can be determined. Recognition also is possible for improving the effectiveness of state government or improving services to the public by permitting more work to be accomplished within an agency without increasing the cost of operations.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction grants incentive awards for the Office of Public Instruction and determines their monetary value.

Nominations for awards may come from current employees, employees of other state agencies and from non-employees. Individual employees, groups or teams of employees and non-employees all may be eligible to be nominated for awards.

The Superintendent may approve an award of up to \$500 or up to 40 hours of paid leave as an award for an action which benefits the agency but a documented value cannot be calculated.

The Superintendent may approve an award of up to \$17,000 for an achievement or outcome with a documented value.

II. DEFINITIONS

1. "Employee" means, as defined in 2-18-1101, MCA, "any employee of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch or the Montana University System."
2. "Group or team of employees" means, as defined in 2-18-1101, MCA, "a group, team or work unit of employees working cooperatively."

III. PROGRAM COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Personnel Officer is the Office of Public Instruction Employee Incentive Award Program coordinator.
2. The program coordinator is responsible for the following:
 - A. Receiving ideas and suggestions.
 - B. Notifying submitter of the status of proposals.
 - C. Maintaining a tracking system for nominations for awards.
 - D. Chairing a standing committee to evaluate and prioritize nominations for awards.
 - E. Promoting the program within the office.
 - F. Arranging presentation ceremonies, including obtaining monetary awards.
 - G. Publicizing awards to the employees and the media.
 - H. Preparing the annual report of activity for the Department of Administration.
 - I. Making or arranging a reasonable accommodation to participate in the program, if one is requested.
 - J. Any other duty assigned by the Superintendent.

IV. PROCESS TO TRACK SUGGESTIONS OR IDEAS; PROCEDURE TO NOMINATE INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS OR TEAMS FOR AWARDS

1. Office of Public Instruction employees, employees of other state agencies and non-employees may submit ideas or suggestions which could contribute to the efficiency, economy or other improvement of state government. Implementation of these ideas or suggestions is part of the ongoing process of managing the office. The name of the person or persons submitting the idea or suggestion and the date submitted will be recorded.
2. A nomination for an incentive award may be submitted on a form available from Program Coordinator or in another written format.
3. Individuals, groups or teams of employees, other state employees and non-employees may submit nominations for awards for consideration to the program coordinator.

THE NOMINATION MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED. INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE RETURNED. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCESS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

- A. Name, address, telephone number of person(s) submitting the nomination for an incentive award.
- B. Name(s) of individual or group or team of employees nominated, if applicable.
- C. A description of how the outcome, achievement or savings:
 - 1) Exceeds normal expectations for the employee, or group or team of employees, or
 - 2) Has an impact on the delivery of service to the public or other customer, or
 - 3) Directly and to what degree contributes to the office objectives, goals and mission.
- D. The dollar value of the documented savings, including the method used to determine the value.
- E. Signature of the submitter(s) and the date submitted. The Office of Public Instruction will date stamp each nomination which will become the official receipt date of the nomination. The Office of Public Instruction will notify the submitter that the nomination has been received. The Office of Public Instruction may request additional information from the submitter in order to evaluate the nomination.
- F. All nominations for incentive awards are public information available for review.

V. EVALUATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS

- 1. The Superintendent makes the final decision to grant an incentive award.
- 2. The Superintendent will appoint five members to a standing committee and name a chairperson. Committee members serve at the pleasure of the Superintendent. The committee will conduct the initial evaluation and prioritization of nominations for incentive awards. If the committee determines the nomination is applicable to the office, the committee will make non-binding recommendations to the director concerning:
 - A. Approval or disapproval of a nomination for an award, and
 - B. An appropriate monetary or leave award.
- 3. The committee will use the following criteria to evaluate and prioritize nominations:

Compare the outcome, accomplishment or savings to what is normally expected from the employee, group or team of employees through the duties and responsibilities of their positions.

- Those outcomes, accomplishments or savings that exceed expectations by the greatest degree should be given priority for awards.

For example: Some positions are responsible for managing costs either through audit functions, fund management or through management of benefit or claims payments. Cost avoidance may be an integral part of their duties. There is likely an expectation that the normal completion of duties and responsibilities should result in a certain level of cost savings or cost avoidance.

- When cost savings or cost avoidance result from the expected performance of regular duties, outcomes should not be given priority for awards.

- If cost savings or cost avoidance results from activities that:

- * are highly original or creative, involving innovative or novel approaches developed by members of the group or team;
- * significantly exceed the level of effort or diligence normally expected from the employee's positions;
- * require cooperative work efforts possible only through initiatives of group or team members that go above and beyond what is normally expected through existing work structure or organization;

then resulting outcomes, achievements or cost savings should be given priority for award.

Evaluate the impact of the outcome, accomplishment or savings on delivery of service to the public or other customer.

- Outcomes, accomplishments or savings having the greatest impact on the well being of the office customer group should be given the highest priority for award.

Evaluate the outcome, accomplishment or savings in terms of how directly and to what degree they contribute to OPI objectives, goals and mission.

- Outcomes, accomplishments or savings making the greatest contribution toward OPI's stated objectives, goals and mission should be given the highest priority for award.

When evaluating a suggestion, invention or idea, consider:

- Is the suggestion, idea or invention original? Is it highly innovative, representing a significant departure from previous approaches or ideas or is it a minor modification to an existing approach?

- Has the suggestion, idea or invention been fully implemented? To what degree did it require modification or further development before it could be successfully implemented?
- How important was the suggestion, idea or invention in contributing to the outcome, accomplishment or cost savings? Did it allow a minor improvement in an outcome that would have occurred without the suggestion, idea or invention, or did it provide the principal impetus or mechanism for an outcome that would not have occurred without the suggestion, idea or invention?

4. Two types of incentive awards are available.

- A. The first is an award for an achievement or outcome that does not result in cost savings that can be specifically determined a year after the achievement or outcome is implemented and the cost savings actually incurred. In this case, the Superintendent may award a maximum of \$500 per employee or non-employee or not more than 40 hours of paid leave time for an employee. Larger awards may be proposed and submitted to the legislature for consideration.
 - B. The second is an award for an achievement or outcome producing cost savings that can be measured after the savings are actually incurred. The Superintendent may grant an award which may not exceed:
 - 1) 10% of the first \$100,000 of cost savings actually incurred during the 12 months following implementation of the suggestions; plus
 - 2) 5% of the next \$100,000 of cost savings actually incurred during that 12-month period; plus
 - 3) 2% of the next \$100,000 of cost savings actually incurred during that 12-month period.
5. If the award is to be divided between two or more persons, the Superintendent determines the amount each person is to receive.
6. The committee may request additional assistance from other department staff, other state employees, and/or any person or group able to provide information necessary to make an informed recommendation.
7. The committee will meet as nominations are received, but no more than once a month. Minutes of the meetings will be kept.
8. The committee will document in writing the evaluation and priority for award which is recommended.
9. If the committee determines the nomination is not applicable to the office, the committee may:

- A. Return the nomination to the submitter with that explanation, or
 - B. After consultation with the program coordinator in another agency to which the nomination may apply, refer the nomination to the new agency and notify the submitter of that action.
10. If the committee determines the nomination may be applicable in other agencies, the committee may contact the program coordinator(s) to determine if additional agencies would benefit from the nomination and will participate in funding the award.

VI. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

- 1. The Superintendent will make the final decision regarding the adoption of an incentive award and the amount of the award.
- 2. The incentive award review committee will compile its evaluations and priority recommendations for awards for the agency head no later than March 1 and September 1.
- 3. The maximum number of adopted incentive awards in a fiscal year for the Office of Public Instruction is 26.
- 4. Incentive awards will be presented in April and October.
- 5. The list of awards required by 2-18-1106, MCA, will be prepared by (the program coordinator or committee chairperson) and will be provided to the Department of Administration on the format prescribed by the department within 30 days of the end of each fiscal year.

VII. CLOSING

- 1. The Office of Public Instruction will make reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in the Statewide Employee Incentive Award Program. To request an accommodation, contact (program coordinator, address, telephone, and TDD and FAX numbers).

Effective: 2/3/00

